



The Wisconsin ARES/RACES Emergency Coordinator



VOLUME 1 NUMBER 7

JULY 1999

WISCONSIN SECTION EMERGENCY COORDINATOR AND EDITOR:

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The WEC Newsletter is sent monthly to all American Radio Relay League Emergency Coordinators in the State of Wisconsin. It is intended to provide a forum for ECs to share ideas concerning the organization and training of their respective groups, and as a source of news concerning ARES and RACES activities in the state.

Comments, suggestions and articles (finished or in rough form) are solicited from the readers.

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ARES/RACES Support for Y2K

Requests for Amateur Radio support for Y2K are picking up but are very uneven from county to county. Mack Brophy (N9NTB), our liaison with Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) has come up with an excellent idea that will provide adequate coverage and information transfer across the state on New Year's eve.

ECs, please find one to two HF operators in your ARES group that will volunteer as monitor/relay stations on New Year's Eve.

Perhaps the two could work together at one site. The job of these two ops will be to monitor your local VHF/UHF repeaters, and to relay any emergency traffic to the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on HF that night (see frequencies elsewhere in this newsletter). Once you have identified those two operators, send me their names, calls and the repeater frequencies they will monitor. We will publish this in the December newsletter (which will come out mid-November). In this way, we will all know what repeaters will be monitored and which hams are designated to relay emergency reports on HF. If the monitored repeater goes down, reports can still be sent to the monitor/relay ops via simplex on the output frequency of the repeater.

If you can manage more than a couple of ops, have the additional folks monitor the calling frequency (146.52 MHz) for emergency traffic, should the repeaters lose power.

Of course, it would be ideal if all emergency traffic could be handled at the county EOC level and they could then determine what information needed to be sent to the State EOC. Indeed, if you know that your county EOC will be up and manned, have your ops send all messages to them instead of directly to the Wisconsin EOC Hamshack. Let the county EOC relay to the state. However, not all county EOCs are HF capable, and some may not be staffed by hams that night. In that case, forward traffic direct to the State Hamshack.

This scheme, devised by Mack, should prevent any emergency traffic from falling through the cracks, and it is a good opportunity for us to provide a real service in the public interest. ECs, please make this a priority project and get those names/calls/repeater freqs to me as soon as you can (no later than 1 Nov, or the info will miss the publication deadline).

Test Your Ability On June 26th

There is a major drill on June 26th that will check out your ability to contact the State EOC Hamshack on HF. This will be a good test of communications ability from outlying counties as well as excellent preparation for the Y2K event later on this year. The drill will be monitored by the Department of Administration, and there have already been several inquiries from the Governor's Office concerning whether ham support will be forthcoming for the test. Each ARES EC/RACES RO should find one member to check in, between the hours of 7:00 and 9:00 PM on that day. Note that this is Saturday night of Field Day weekend, and we are NOT looking for massive numbers of checkins from every Field Day site in the state! One per county is enough to nicely demonstrate the ability of counties to reach the State EOC on this frequency. We want participation, but don't want to inundate the State EOC Hamshack. ECs, please see what you can arrange so the Hamshack receives one "hit" from your county.

WEM EOC Radio Room (Hamshack) Activation Plan

[This was published in the March issue, but it is darned important and both Mack and I want to be sure that each EC/RO has a copy, so here it is again.]

Request widest dissemination to WI hams. In the event of an unanticipated failure of normal communication resources, it seemed advisable to have a reference document for hams to use in order to establish initial emergency communications with the State EOC in Wisconsin. Hams are encouraged to participate in the Badger Emergency Net (BEN) each day at noon on 03.985 MHz LSB and to join their local ARES\RACES\ MARS organizations in order to provide an organized and trained response for their communities.

73 de Mack N9NTB

In the event of a National or State emergency, the following WEM EOC Radio Room (Hamshack) Activation Plan will be implemented upon the request of the Administrator, Wisconsin Emergency Management or the WEM Duty Officer:

1. The hamshack callsign is WC9AAG.
2. The hamshack will be manned by ARES/RACES/MARS volunteers. HF radio operator support for the Wisconsin National Guard will be coordinated through the WEM Communications and Warning Officer.
3. Initially HF frequency 07.277 MHz LSB will be monitored during the period 1200Z thru 2400Z.

4. Initially HF frequency 3.9935 MHz LSB will be monitored during the period 2400Z thru 1200Z.
5. PacTOR will be available, as needed, on HF frequency 03.584 MHz USB.
6. VHF full time packet (wc9aag@wc9aag.en53ja.wi.us .na) MSYS BBS is available on the ARES\RACES packet network frequency 145.610 MHz. Node is ARWEM.
7. VHF voice will be on the Madison Area Repeater Association 147.150 MHz (PL 123.0) repeater, linked (if needed) to the Milwaukee MAARS 145.130 MHz (PL 127.3) repeater.
8. UHF\6M voice will be on the Southern Wisconsin Repeater Group (443.400\443.675\53.090) and the UHF Backbone Network.
9. Emergency bulletins, frequency updates, situation reports, etc., will be disseminated using the Badger Emergency Net (BEN) on 03.985 MHz LSB, if it is activated.
10. E-mail will be utilized, when available. Hamshack e-mail address: races@dma.state.wi.us.
11. The hamshack telephone number is 1-608-242-3323 (with Voice Mail), if operational.
12. HF voice frequencies will be adjusted for changing band conditions.
13. For additional RACES or ARES information, contact the ARRL SEC/State RACES Officer Stan Kaplan, WB9RQR, at email skaplan@mcw.edu or phone 1-414-284-9346.
14. For general WEM EOC hamshack information, send an inquiry to the hamshack email address or call the hamshack

phone number. Check the WEM internet web page at <http://badger.state.wi.us/agencies/dma/wem/index.htm>.

15. Air Force MARS point of contact is Phillip Rebensburg, AFA3FM\AFF3W\IKC9CI, email phillipr@execpc.com or phone 1-414-251-6250.
16. Army MARS point of contact is Gustov Bonow, AAR5BS/W9IHW, email bmsmarswi@wctc.net or phone 1-715-887-3962.
17. WEM. point of contact is Alan Wohlferd, Communications and Warning Officer, email wohlfa@dma.state.wi.us or phone 1-608-242-3250.

(Current as of 1May99)

EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

[As promised, here is the latest job description from the ARRL].

The ARRL Emergency Coordinator is a key team player in ARES on the local emergency scene. Working with the Section Emergency Coordinator, the DEC and Official Emergency Stations, the EC prepares for, and engages in management of communications needs in disasters. EC duties include:

1. Promote and enhance the activities of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) for the benefit of the public as a voluntary, noncommercial communications service.
2. Manage and coordinate the training, organization and emergency participation of interested amateurs working in support of the communities, agencies or functions designated by the Section Emergency Coordinator/Section Manager.

3. Establish viable working relationships with federal, state, county, city governmental and private agencies in the ARES jurisdictional area which need the services of ARES in emergencies. Determine what agencies are active in your area, evaluate each of their needs, and which ones you are capable of meeting, and then prioritize these agencies and need. Discuss your planning with your Section Emergency Coordinator and then with your counterparts in each of the agencies. Ensure they are all aware of your ARES group's capabilities, and perhaps more importantly, your limitations.

4. Develop detailed local operational plans with "served" agency officials in your jurisdiction that set forth precisely what each of your expectations are during a disaster operation. Work jointly to establish protocols for mutual trust and respect. All matters involving recruitment and utilization of ARES volunteers are directed by you, in response to the needs assessed by the agency officials. Technical issues involving message format, security of message transmission, Disaster Welfare Inquiry policies, and others, should be reviewed and expounded upon in your detailed local operations plans.

5. Establish local communications networks run on a regular basis and periodically test those networks by conducting realistic drills

6. Establish an emergency traffic plan, with Welfare traffic inclusive, utilizing the National Traffic System as one active component for traffic handling. Establish an operational liaison with local and section nets, particularly for handling Welfare traffic in an emergency situation.

7. In times of disaster, evaluate the communications needs of the jurisdiction and respond quickly to those needs. The EC will assume authority and responsibility for emergency response and

performance by ARES personnel under his jurisdiction.

8. Work with other non-ARES amateur provider-groups to establish mutual respect and understanding, and a coordination mechanism for the good of the public and Amateur Radio. The goal is to foster an efficient and effective Amateur Radio response overall.

9. Work for growth in your ARES program, making it a stronger, more valuable resource and hence able to meet more of the agencies' local needs. There are thousands of new Technicians coming into the amateur service that would make ideal additions to your ARES roster. A stronger ARES means a better ability to serve your communities in times of need and a greater sense of pride for Amateur Radio by both amateurs and the public.

10. Report regularly to the SEC, as required.

Recruitment of new hams and League members is an integral part of the job of every League appointee. Appointees should take advantage of every opportunity to recruit a new ham or member to foster growth of Field Organization programs, and our abilities to serve the public.

Requirements: Technician or higher class license; Full ARRL membership. **FSD-46 (2/97)**

Where is your RACES roster?

Last month, Mack Brophy (N9NTB) sent each EC a list of RACES members in their county. He requested that you highlight the names of those who should be removed (anyone who is not an active member of your ARES group), and get the list back to me. Thus far, I have only received responses from a few ECs:

1. Adams

2. Burnett
3. Calumet
4. Eau Claire
5. Ozaukee
6. Washburn
7. Washington
8. Wood

Once again, your help is needed in consolidating and updating the RACES roster for the state. If a member of your ARES group is not on the roster, we will add them and eventually get a RACES certificate to you for presentation. You need to supply the information shown on the RACES roster so that we may add that person. If there is a ham on the roster you received who is NOT a member of your ARES group, highlight the name for deletion. Alternatively, you may contact the ham and invite them to join your group, in which case they may continue as a RACES member. To remain on the state roster of RACES hams, an individual must be a member of an ARES group.

If you have misplaced your RACES roster or did not receive one, feel free to send me a note requesting another copy.

Help me out here, folks. I now personally maintain the roster for the state on my own computer, so this request for information is from me. I don't like to burden you with administrative tasks, but **you** are the only accurate source of this information, and the state RACES roster is woefully out of date and bloated with inactive members (including a great many silent keys!).

New Trempealeau EC

Your SEC appointed Jerry Knudson, KB9PJM, as EC of Trempealeau County effective 14 June. Please jot down his data in your roster:

239 E Main Street, Arcadia 54612
H: (608) 323-3011

jknud@win.bright.net

Welcome, Jerry, and good luck in building your ARES group!

This Is Gonna Be a Favorite Saying!

The ARRL Letter, Vol. 18, No. 24, 1999Jun11, carried an interesting story entitled BLACK HILLS HAMS HANDLE DOUBLE WHAMMY. The story tells about hams in the Northern Black Hills region of South Dakota responding when an optic cable was cut, disrupting all phone service (including cellular and 911) in a 2+ county-wide area. A little later that day, a killer tornado swept through the area, further disrupting phone service and leaving many injured and one dead. Of course, hams came to the rescue as usual, providing essential communications in many areas.

Of great interest to your SEC was a statement given to the local newspaper by Jerome Harvey, Director of Emergency Management for the City of Lead: **"In recent years there has been an over-reliance on hard-wired communication systems and cell phones. Area hams are the 'go-to' folks when all the latest technology bites the dust."**

Jerome, himself a ham (N0ZBR), succinctly described the current forte of ham radio emergency services. Because we are decentralized, and because we own and routinely operate our own equipment, we are the 'go-to' folks when other communications methods fail. We can pass messages when no one else can.

But the ability to smoothly and quickly and efficiently pass messages in emergency situations does not come naturally, nor is the ability passed out to new hams when they get their ticket. It has to be learned.

How do you learn to pass messages? It is done routinely on HF nets, and participation in HF nets is certainly an excellent way to learn. But HF nets are generally from one fixed station to another fixed station, and that type of training is really only part of what we are generally called on to do in an emergency. How about 2-meter nets? Point-to-point (simplex) nets or nets that operate through repeaters are much closer to first responder (fire, police) type communications than HF, and it is this type of communications that we are most likely to be asked to provide in emergency incidents. It is more common to be asked to shadow an official with an HT-carrying ham or set up HT communications in a shelter than it is to pass Health and Welfare traffic on HF. The point here is not that HF H&W traffic is not important (because it IS). The point is that the most common type of communications we are asked to provide involves 2-meters and HTs.

So then, how do you train? Weekly check-in nets are good for procedures, but they usually don't give most folks practice in passing traffic. A net can include the Net Control Operator passing a message or two to all those listening, but one-way passing of messages doesn't really mimic communications in the field.

At our last OZARES meeting, Assistant EC for Training Jack Morrison (N9SFG) split those attending into three groups of about 6 hams each. He sent them to different rooms in the Justice Center. Each group had an 800 MHz public safety radio (we had used ham band HTs during a similar exercise about a year ago, and Jack wanted the group to get familiar with the public safety band radios). Ham 1 in Group 1 sent a short pre-prepared message to Ham 1 in Group 2, and that operator sent it on to Ham 1 in

Group 3. Finally, Ham 1 in Group 3 sent the message back to Ham 2 in Group 1. That person then sent a new message out to make the rounds. The messages were, of course, copied on paper (message forms) in each case.

Jack's a clever guy! He asked not that the message be copied verbatim, but just that the essentials be accurately copied and forwarded. He expected things like wind speed numbers and hailstone sizes and highway locations to be right on the money, while the verbiage that accompanies such reports could be paraphrased fairly loosely. Well, let me tell you, we learned! Not only did we learn how to use those unfamiliar 800 MHz radios (there was not a single report of a ham being bitten by one), we also learned that it was fairly easy to screw up an address or a wind speed. And, we were using voice, not CW!

It was great training for the group. It was a good mimic of actual field conditions, yet it took place in three rooms in the same building, and the exercise was over in less than two hours. Why not try something like it with your ARES group?

73, Stan